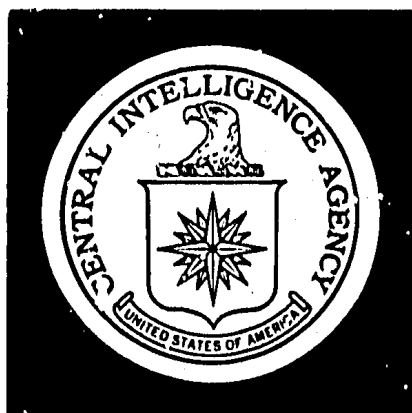


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**DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE**

# Intelligence Memorandum

### *Shipping To North Vietnam During May 1970*

~~Secret~~

ER IM 70-87  
June 1970

Copy No.

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**SECRET****Foreword**

All data in this memorandum are preliminary and subject to minor changes as additional information becomes available. These changes usually involve ship arrivals and cargoes from Communist China, and to a lesser extent, cargoes carried by ships of the Free World. Data for the preceding month and monthly averages presented in the tables have been adjusted to reflect corrections and additions. Weights of cargoes are expressed in metric tons. Because of rounding, components may not add to the totals shown.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Directorate of Intelligence  
June 1970

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Shipping To North Vietnam  
During May 1970

Highlights

North Vietnamese seaborne imports in May rose 42% to more than 214,000 tons, the highest level in nearly two years. This sharp rise was sparked by record deliveries from the USSR of 133,900 tons, up 53% from the 87,700 tons delivered in April. Soviet deliveries were marked by an inordinately high level of shipments originating at Soviet Black Sea ports -- 53,900 tons, the highest volume since March 1967. All of these ships departed from Soviet Black Sea ports prior to 30 April.

As compared with April, deliveries of fertilizer (25,900 tons) and petroleum (37,300 tons) more than doubled, with fertilizer deliveries the highest since March 1967. Foodstuff deliveries increased for the fourth consecutive month, mainly because of an 11,800-ton shipment of sugar from Cuba. Three Soviet ships delivered nearly 14 tons of probable military-related cargo.

Seaborne exports in May were depressed, totaling only 32,400 tons. Coal exports increased slightly, but shipments of apatite and rice were down and no cement was exported.

Fifty ships arrived in May, including a record number (31) of Soviet ships. Congestion at Haiphong was at its worst level in ten months; the average number of foreign dry cargo ships in port per day

*Note: This memorandum was produced solely by CIA. It was prepared by the Office of Economic Research and information on ship arrivals was coordinated with the Naval Intelligence Command.*

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increased from 15 in April to 19 in May. The high number of arrivals in May should result in increased average layover times in June. For the first time since October 1966, two Soviet ships en route to North Vietnam transited the Hainan Strait.

#### Record Imports from the USSR

1. Record shipments of nearly 134,000 tons from the USSR pushed North Vietnamese seaborne imports to 214,000 tons, the third highest monthly volume recorded, exceeded only by deliveries during May and June 1968 (see Tables 1 and 2). As compared with April, Soviet deliveries were up more than 46,000 tons and increases were registered in all major commodity categories. Soviet shipments of fertilizer -- 18,900 tons -- were more than twice those in April and the highest since July 1968, and the delivery of 33,400 tons of general and miscellaneous cargo was a record high. Although deliveries of petroleum -- 37,300 tons -- were slightly below the nearly 40,000 tons reportedly requested by the North Vietnamese, they still were considerably above the monthly average for the year. Soviet deliveries of foodstuffs -- 44,300 tons, mostly wheat flour shipped from the Soviet Far East -- were up slightly and accounted for 33% of total deliveries from the USSR.

2. As shown in the tabulation below, the Soviet performance was marked by a high level of shipments originating at Black Sea ports. In fact, deliveries from the Black Sea ports -- nearly 54,000 tons -- were the highest since March 1967, when nearly 67,000 tons were shipped. Of total deliveries originating at Black Sea ports, 28,500 tons were general and miscellaneous cargo, 18,900 tons fertilizer, 6,300 tons petroleum, and about 200 tons miscellaneous foodstuffs. All Black Sea deliveries were on ships with port departures prior to 30 April.

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	Metric Tons		
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Black Sea</u>	<u>Far East</u>
1969 (monthly average)	77,500	24,800	52,700
1970			
January	113,600	25,200	88,400
February	99,700	30,300	69,400
March	129,600	31,500	98,100
April	87,700	28,000	59,700
May	133,900	a/ 53,900	76,900
1970 (monthly average)	112,900	33,800	78,500

a. Including one 3,100-ton consignment from a Baltic Sea port.

3. Although shipments from Soviet Far Eastern ports -- 76,900 tons -- were well above the April level of 59,700 tons, they still were somewhat lower than the 1970 monthly average. Shipments of wheat flour -- 44,100 tons -- comprised more than 57% of deliveries originating at Far Eastern ports; petroleum -- 27,900 tons -- accounted for about 36%; and general and miscellaneous cargo, mostly vehicles -- 4,900 tons -- comprised the remainder.

#### Falloff in Chinese Deliveries

4. Deliveries from Communist China (46,400 tons) were down about 7,000 tons as compared with April, but were still above the 1970 monthly average. Despite a drop of nearly 9,000 tons in foodstuffs deliveries, to 26,200 tons, this volume was still considerably higher than the monthly average for the year.

#### Special Cargoes

5. About 14 tons of probable military-related cargoes were delivered in May by three Soviet ships, the *Biysk*, the *Beresovka*, and the *Partisanskaya Iskra*. In addition, the *Beresovka* as well as the *Morshansk* delivered a small number of helicopter engines. A Polish merchant ship, the *Prayjaan Narodow*, on its way from Gdynia to Haiphong, where it should arrive in

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July, passed through the Kiel Canal and declared as dangerous cargo 1,600 tons of "ammo." This cargo is probably ammonite, an explosive, which was delivered by Polish ships in 1969. [REDACTED]

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### Drop in Seaborne Exports

6. North Vietnamese seaborne exports fell 23% from 42,200 tons to 32,400 tons, reflecting a sharp 7,000-ton drop in apatite shipments and a 2,200-ton decline in rice shipments (see Tables 3 and 4). Shipments of apatite and rice during May amounted to only 1,500 tons and 300 tons, respectively. Coal exports increased slightly to 28,600 tons. While coal shipments to China nearly tripled from 4,300 tons to 12,400 tons, exports to Japan dropped from 17,100 tons to 12,200 tons. Most of the coal was exported through the port of Cam Pha with one 4,000-ton consignment being shipped from Hon Gai. As shown in the tabulation below, the monthly average for coal exports has dropped about 7,400 tons between 1969 and the first five months of 1970.

	<u>Metric Tons</u>		
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Cam Pha</u>	<u>Hon Gai</u>
1968 (monthly average)	52,100	38,600	13,500
1969 (monthly average)	38,400	33,000	5,400
1970			
January	45,600	35,900	9,700
February	38,900	38,900	--
March	14,800	10,800	4,000
April	27,300	23,000	4,300
May	28,600	24,600	4,000
1970 (monthly average)	31,000	26,600	4,400

7. Management problems, low labor productivity, and obsolete equipment apparently are continuing to impede North Vietnamese production and export of coal.

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For example, first quarter coal exports, 99,300 tons, are the lowest first quarter shipments on record. Unless a sharp improvement is effected during the remainder of the year, 1970 will continue to reflect a declining annual level of coal exports.

#### Ship Arrivals and Port Activity

8. There were 50 ship arrivals in North Vietnamese ports during May, compared with 42 in April (see Table 5). Soviet arrivals rose sharply to a record of 31 ships, with 20 coming from Soviet Pacific ports, nine from Black Sea ports, one from the Baltic port of Kaliningrad, and one from Japan. Chinese arrivals fell from eight to four; East European rose from one to three; North Vietnamese fell from four to two; and one Cuban ship arrived from Cuba. There were nine Free World arrivals, the same as in April, including three calls by Somali-flag ships. Although there were no Cypriot-flag arrivals for the seventh consecutive month, one ship, the *Buonavia* out of Constanta, is reportedly en route to Haiphong.

9. Congestion at Haiphong in May reached the worst level in ten months, intensifying to a peak in the middle of the month with only a slight improvement toward the end. The average number of foreign dry cargo ships in port per day rose from 15 in April to 19 in May. Although the average layover time for departing dry cargo ships decreased from 14 to 13 days, it should increase in June because of the impact of the high number of arrivals in May (see Tables 6 and 7).

#### Soviet Tankers Transit the Hainan Straits

10. Two small Soviet tankers, the *Narymneft* (1,772 GRT) from a Soviet Black Sea port and the *Biryusa* (3,674 GRT) from the Baltic port of Kaliningrad, transited the Hainan Strait on their way to North Vietnam. Both were being transferred probably to an unspecified Soviet Far Eastern base of the Ministry of the Fishing Industry. These are the first Soviet ships to transit the Hainan Strait since the Soviet tanker *Amursk* returned to Vladivostok from Haiphong in October 1966. It is also the first time a Soviet ship has been observed in Chinese Communist waters since the *Komsomolets Ukrainy* reportedly was harassed in a Chinese port in March 1968.

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Table 1  
Seaborne Imports, by Origin and Commodity  
1970

Thousand Metric Tons										
Origin	Foodstuffs		Fertilizer		Petroleum		General and Miscellaneous		Total	
	May	Monthly Average Jan-Apr	May	Monthly Average Jan-Apr	May	Monthly Average Jan-Apr	May	Monthly Average Jan-Apr	May	Monthly Average Jan-Apr
<i>Total</i>	<i>82.3</i>	<i>62.8</i>	<i>25.9</i>	<i>14.7</i>	<i>37.3</i>	<i>30.7</i>	<i>69.0</i>	<i>52.0</i>	<i>214.4</i>	<i>160.1</i>
Communist	<u>82.3</u>	<u>62.8</u>	<u>24.4</u>	<u>12.6</u>	<u>37.3</u>	<u>30.7</u>	<u>66.4</u>	<u>48.5</u>	<u>210.4</u>	<u>154.5</u>
USSR	44.3	45.6	18.9	9.6	37.3	29.9	33.4	22.5	133.9	107.7
Eastern Europe	Negl.	0.1	5.5	1.1	--	--	12.4	8.6	17.9	9.8
China	26.2	15.1	--	--	--	0.8	20.2	16.4	46.4	32.2
North Korea	--	--	--	1.9	--	--	--	0.8	--	2.7
Cuba	11.8	2.0	--	--	--	--	0.3	Negl.	12.1	2.0
Free World	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1.5</u>	<u>2.1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2.6</u>	<u>3.4</u>	<u>4.1</u>	<u>5.6</u>
Japan	--	--	1.5	2.1	--	--	0.8	0.2	2.3	2.3
Cambodia	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	3.0	--	3.0
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	1.8	0.3	1.8	0.3

Table 2  
Seaborne Imports, by Flag and Commodity a/  
1970

Thousand Metric Tons							
Flag	May				Total	April	Monthly Average Jan-Apr
	Food- stuffs	Ferti- lizer	Petro- leum	General and Miscel- laneous <u>b/</u>			
<i>Total</i>	82.3	25.9	37.3	69.0	214.4	151.3	160.1
Communist	61.9	25.9	37.3	51.8	176.8	115.8	137.1
Soviet	44.3	20.4	37.3	34.2	136.2	91.0	111.1
East European	Negl.	5.5	--	14.2	19.7	7.2	9.6
Chinese	5.7	--	--	3.0	8.7	17.5	13.6
Cuban	11.8	--	--	0.3	12.1	--	2.0
North Vietnamese	--	--	--	Negl.	Negl.	0.1	0.8
Free World	20.4	0	0	17.2	37.7	35.5	23.0

*a. Identified imports include some estimates of bulk cargoes, using methods which have proved to be highly reliable.*

*b. Including 37,100 metric tons of unidentified cargo, 10,500 tons of metal products, 4,520 tons of machinery, and 3,400 tons of vehicles.*

Table 3

Seaborne Exports, by Destination and Commodity  
1970

Thousand Metric Tons

Destination	Coal		Cement		Apatite		Rice		General and Miscellaneous		Total	
	May	Monthly Average Jan-Apr	May	Monthly Average Jan-Apr	May	Monthly Average Jan-Apr	May	Monthly Average Jan-Apr	May	Monthly Average Jan-Apr	May	Monthly Average Jan-Apr
Total	28.6	31.6	0	1.4	1.5	9.7	0.3	1.5	1.9	4.1	32.4	48.4
Communist	12.4	13.8	0	0	1.5	9.7	0	0	0	1.4	13.9	24.9
USSR	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.1	--	0.1
Eastern Europe	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1.0	--	1.0
China	12.4	12.5	--	--	1.5	1.5	--	--	--	0.1	13.9	14.2
North Korea	--	--	--	--	--	8.2	--	--	--	0.1	--	8.3
Cuba	--	1.2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.1	--	1.4
Free World	16.2	17.9	0	1.4	0	Neg1.	0.3	1.5	1.9	2.7	18.5	23.4
Japan	12.2	16.3	--	--	--	Neg1.	--	--	Neg1.	0.5	12.2	16.8
Cambodia	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.5	--	0.5
Other	4.0	1.5	--	1.4	--	--	0.3	1.5	1.9	1.7	6.2	6.1

Table 4  
Seaborne Exports, by Flag and Commodity a/  
1970

Thousand Metric Tons								
Flag	May					Total	April	Monthly Average Jan-Apr
	Coal	Cement	Apatite	Rice	General and Miscel- laneous			
<i>Total</i>	<i>28.6</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1.5</i>	<i>0.3</i>	<i>1.9</i>	<i>32.4</i>	<i>42.2</i>	<i>48.4</i>
Communist	<u>28.6</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1.5</u>	<u>0.3</u>	<u>1.9</u>	<u>32.4</u>	<u>40.2</u>	<u>47.4</u>
Soviet	16.2	--	--	--	0.2	16.4	19.3	24.8
East European	--	--	--	--	--	--	4.3	2.5
Chinese	12.4	--	1.5	--	--	13.9	8.3	14.2
Cuban	--	--	--	--	--	--	5.5	2.7
North Vietnamese	--	--	--	0.3	1.7	2.0	2.9	3.2
Free World	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2.0</u>	<u>1.0</u>

*a. Identified exports include some estimates of bulk cargoes, using methods which have proved to be highly reliable.*

Ship Arrivals, by Type, Flag, and Origin  
1970

Type/Flag	May						April Total	Monthly Average Jan-Apr
	Origins							
	USSR		Communist China	Other Communist	Free World	Total		
	Black Sea	Far East						
Total	10	20	13	4	3	50	42	43.2
Dry cargo	7	14	13	4	3	41	38	38.0
Tanker	3	6	--	--	--	9	4	5.2
Communist	10	20	4	4	3	41	33	37.5
Soviet	10	20	--	--	1	31	20	24.2
East European	--	--	--	3	--	3	1	2.5
Bulgarian	--	--	--	1	--	1	--	0.5
Polish	--	--	--	2	--	2	1	2.0
Chinese	--	--	4	--	--	4	8	6.0
Cuban	--	--	--	1	--	1	--	0.8
North Vietnamese	--	--	--	--	2	2	4	4.0
Free World	0	0	9	0	0	9	9	5.7
British	--	--	6	--	--	6	7	4.2
Somalian	--	--	3	--	--	3	2	1.2
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.2 a/

a. Maltese.

Table 6  
Average Number of Dry Cargo Ships in Haiphong per Day

Month	Number of Ships			
	1967	1968	1969	1970
January	7	21	24	14
February	10	23	21	17
March	16	23	21	15
April	16	19	21	15
May	18	16	20	19
June	25	23	18	
July	22	30	21	
August	17	28	17	
September	13	34	17	
October	13	33	15	
November	12	29	11	
December	13	27	13	
<i>Average for year</i>	15	25	18	

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Table 7  
Average Layover Times  
for Foreign Dry Cargo Ships Departing Haiphong a/

Month	Number of Days			
	1967	1968	1969	1970
January	12	15	25	13
February	10	27	21	14
March	13	28	17	17
April	12	19	19	14
May	17	14	20	13
June	22	17	21	
July	24	25	21	
August	33	31	22	
September	19	41	21	
October	19	35	19	
November	18	30	16	
December	15	29	14	
Average for year	18	25	20	

a. The average layover time for departing dry cargo ships is compiled by averaging layover times (including both the day of arrival and the day of departure) of all foreign dry cargo ships leaving Haiphong in the month. Tankers are excluded from the average because they do not compete with dry cargo ships for the limited berthing space in Haiphong.